

Automatic Voter Registration Bill Proposed

Written by Wisconsin Senate, Jay Wadd

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<http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/avr-press-conf-s5.jpg>



Bill would remove unnecessary obstacles for Wisconsinites to exercise their fundamental right to vote. Joint Finance Republicans had taken AVR out of budget.

MADISON, WI – Representative David Crowley (D-Milwaukee) and Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) hosted a press conference Monday with Governor Tony Evers, announcing LRB-1105/P2, legislation relating to implementation of state wide automatic voter registration (AVR). This is following the recent decision of Joint Finance Republicans to remove AVR implementation from Governor Evers Budget.

“The cornerstone of democracy and representative governance is the belief of the people in the legitimacy of free and fair elections,” stated Rep. Crowley. “Wisconsin has a proud tradition of robust civic engagement and electoral participation but has seen its state government spend the last decade fighting to create new barriers and unnecessary obstacles for Wisconsinites to exercise their fundamental right to vote.



“When I started in the Senate, both Democrats and Republicans believed the more people voting the better,” said Senator Hansen. “There were bipartisan efforts that expanded early and absentee voting, and voter registration. Then in 2011 things changed. Instead of working together to make it easier for people to vote and to register to vote, Republicans passed more and more changes to the law designed to suppress voter participation.”

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Rep. Crowley's and Sen. Hansen's legislation will reduce potential barriers that individuals may face in registering to vote and restore the public's faith in our representative government. The effects of AVR have been consistent across the nation. From Rhode Island to California, AVR is boosting registration rates across the map. States like Georgia, which had a 93.7% increase in voter registration rates after implementing AVR, will be used as a model in implementing our own system here in Wisconsin.



"We have the opportunity to make 2020 our most diverse electorate yet: increasing voter registration rates encourages participation in the electoral process and provides the potential for more voices to be represented within our government," said Crowley.

"The people of Wisconsin deserve access to a high quality, modern election system that encourages participation from the largest number of voters, Hansen said. "One of the best ways to help with that is to make it as easy as possible for people to register to vote. We can do that by implementing a system of Automatic Voter Registration that creates a more fair voting process."

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Photo from press conference above: Governor Evers, Senator Hansen, Representative David Crowley and Representative Shelia Stubbs